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Celebrity Pg14

More ink irks Posh

Thousands remain in the dark

WEATHER About 90,000 homes and businesses across Ontario were still without power last night, after savage winds gusting up to 100 km/h knocked down hydro poles throughout the province Sunday. And it will probably be days before power is fully restored.

Although there was no serious flooding in Toronto due to the rain and warm weather on the weekend, officials are asking people to remain careful around rivers, streams and ice-covered ponds.

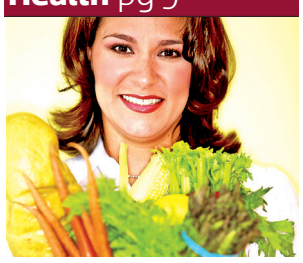
There is no rain expected in the immediate future, but waterways are still flowing at a higher-than-normal level, said TRCA spokesperson Ryan Ness. "We are constantly monitoring low-lying areas, but there's no threat as of now," he said.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canada pg 3

Eight men buried in B.C. avalanche

Health pg 9



People to dine out less: Study

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DAN BALILTY/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Palestinian women cross a street yesterday in the Shuafat refugee camp at a demonstration against Israel's military operation in Gaza. Israel's overwhelming air campaign against the Gaza Strip entered its third day yesterday.

'To bitter end'

Israel targets Hamas military infrastructure in Gaza

Fatalities continued to climb amid mounting destruction as Israel's deadly military campaign in Gaza ground through its third day yesterday.

The three-day death toll rose yesterday to 364, with some 1,400 reported wounded. The UN said at least 62 of the dead were civilians, while medics said eight children under the age of 17 were killed in two separate strikes overnight.

But there was no sign of a let-up in the attacks as Israeli fighter jets and other aircraft continued to roar over Gaza.

Israeli Defence Minister Ehud Barak said the country is engaged in a "war to the bitter end" against Hamas in Gaza.

"This operation will be extended and deepened as we find necessary," Barak told a special session of the Knesset, or parliament. "Our goal is to strike Hamas and to stop the attacks on Israel."

Israeli war planes continued their strikes on Palestinian munitions stockpiles and what Israeli defined as Hamas' military infrastructure.

Targets included a network of underground tunnels and the campus of the Islamic University in Gaza City, said to be a Hamas stronghold.

A guest house adjoining the residence of Ismail Haniyeh, Hamas' top leader in Gaza, was also hit yesterday. Haniyeh was not home at the time. Like other top Hamas officials in Gaza, he has gone into hiding.

Despite Israeli aerial and naval attacks, Hamas and other Palestinian militant groups in Gaza continued to fire rockets at Israel, killing three Israelis.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

UN calls for ceasefire

• At the United Nations, Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon again condemned Israel's excessive use of force and called for an immediate ceasefire. "The frightening nature of what is happening on the ground, in particular its effects on children — who are more than half of the population — troubles me greatly. I have continuously stressed the need for strict observance of international humanitarian law," he said.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Trying to find safe haven in Gaza

Nasser Barakat is quickly running out of places to hide.

Shortly after Israel launched its current aerial offensive in Gaza on Saturday, its warplanes struck and destroyed a Gaza City mosque, which the Israelis said had been used for meetings by members of the radical Islamist group Hamas.

"No one is safe now. Walking the streets, it's really dangerous." Nasser Barakat

Right away, Barakat fled his home, which was located next door to another Gaza City mosque.

He moved in with friends who lived close to the campus of the Islamic University — which was hit by Israeli air strikes on Sunday and again yesterday morning.

"Now I'm in another place," Barakat, 21, told the Toronto Star yesterday afternoon.

This time, he's hoping danger will pass him by but, like other people in Gaza, he isn't counting on it. "No one is safe now," he said. "Walking the streets, it's really dangerous."

Besides, there is nowhere outdoors to go, and it wouldn't be safe to do so anyway.

Rocket fire, exploding bombs, and the crazed din of warplanes — none of this is exactly new to Gaza's 1.5 million long-suffering souls.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Father finds toddler face-down in tub, revives her with CPR

A three-year-old girl was taken to hospital after her father found her unconscious face-down in a bathtub and revived her with cardiopulmonary resuscitation. The dad had left the girl and six-year-old sister in the tub briefly around noon yesterday while taking care of another child. She was taken to hospital where she was conscious and breathing. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Local

Tom Cochrane to attend polar dip

Musician Tom Cochrane will be among 5,000 spectators at Oakville's Coronation Park on New Year's Day to cheer on 500 dippers as they raise funds for fresh water in Rwanda through World Vision. Cochrane, an Oakville resident, will lead the countdown to start 2009's Courage Brothers Annual Polar Bear Dip for World Vision. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Boy's activism inspires

AUTHOR Bilaal Rajan hasn't yet opened his mouth to speak and already the crowd of 250 is on its feet in a standing ovation. That's the first clue this is no ordinary 12-year-old.

"You can do anything you want to make a positive difference in the world," the young crusader from North York tells a room of real-estate investors. "If we work together as one, change is inevitable, it's unavoidable."

"I am speechless — the way he touched me," Tahani Aburaneh marvels.

And that's how it is everywhere they go, says Bilaal's father Aman.

"It's so great to watch as a parent. He gets up there and he just explodes."

Rajan has helped raise $5 million for children's causes around the world. He's an author, motivational speaker, children's rights activist and child ambassador for UNICEF Canada.

Not surprisingly, the term "overachiever" figures in the title of his new published book, Making Change: Tips from an Underage Overachiever. Its objective is to inspire children to take action and create a more peaceful, caring world, says Bilaal.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Surveillance cameras may be here to stay

Experts to assess effectiveness as pilot project wraps up

A $2-million pilot project that put surveillance cameras in at-risk neighbourhoods across the city wraps up tomorrow.

Over the next few months, a team of outside experts will be analyzing the data and compiling a report on the effectiveness of the cameras in reducing and investigating crime.

That report will be presented to the police services board and Ministry of Community Safety and Correctional Services in late winter or early spring 2009, said Toronto police spokesperson Mark Pugash.

> **"There have been a number of cases where footage has created quite dramatic results."**
> Toronto police spokesperson Mark Pugash

From there, the board will decide whether to continue with the project, funded by the province.

"As a general rule, (closed circuit television) images are one of the first things detectives look for when investigating a crime. And there have been a number of cases where footage has created quite dramatic results," Pugash said.

He highlighted the March 14 shooting death of 18-year-old Abdikarim Ahmed Abdikarim, who was shot in the head outside a housing complex near Yorkdale Mall. Detailed footage was caught on two cameras.

Police posted that footage on YouTube and within weeks, three individuals were charged in connection with the shooting.

Cameras began rolling out across the city in six-month deployments in April 2007. Over the past 18 months, cameras have rotated between four divisions. The last cameras were removed from the Bathurst Avenue and Queen Street West area at the end of October.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

City, police to pay $116,000 to protesters

SETTLEMENT Alex Brown is an unemployed truck driver who lives in a west-end rooming house and is on social assistance. He could use some money.

But he won't touch a penny of the $116,000 that the City of Toronto and Toronto police agreed to pay to settle a lawsuit that was launched by him and two other housing activists, Oriel Varga and Elan Ohayon, nearly eight years ago.

"It's very hard," he said yesterday about donating roughly $70,000 of the settlement toward a trust fund for grassroots housing initiatives. The rest will go to costs of fighting the case. "But what about the needs of others?"

The settlement was a "victory" because it shows that "the government got a conscience," said Brown.

But lawyer Kevin McGivney, who represented the city and police, later said that calling it a "victory" is a "bit like calling a tie hockey game a victory."

"This is purely just a settlement, a compromise on both sides," said McGivney.

VINCE TALOTTA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Housing activists Elan Ohayon, from second left, Alex Brown and Oriel Varga promise to direct more than $100,000 from the settlement of a police lawsuit toward housing initiatives. Lawyer Peter Rosenthal, far left and a media person on the far right are also shown.

In August 1999, the activists were part of a series of protests called the Allan Gardens Project. On Oct. 21, 2000, police cleared the park and arrested Ohayon, whose charges were later dismissed. The next year, the protesters launched a lawsuit alleging the police and the city violated their human rights. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

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Tomorrow's Metro

Music

Kreesha Turner to perform on New Year's Eve in downtown Toronto

metronews.ca

WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Read What causes a scenic mountainside to become a deadly wall of snow at **metronews.ca/canada**

Read Economists question the wisdom of tax-free savings accounts during the recession at **metronews.ca/canada**

Lotteries

Ontario Pick 3: 5 3 7; **Ontario Pick 4** : 5 1 9 6
Encore: 7578582
Daily Keno: 1, 3, 5, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 24, 28, 36, 38, 41, 44, 49, 51, 54, 62, 66, 67

These results are not official.

Fake-degree probe leads to changes at Osgoode Hall

LAW Osgoode Hall law school is moving to tighten admissions procedures security in the wake of a Toronto Star investigation that discovered a third-year student had used a bogus undergraduate degree to enter the York University law program.

"The integrity of our admissions process is of paramount importance to the law school," dean Patrick Monahan wrote in an e-mail to students.

"If even a single individual is able to gain admission to the school improperly, that takes a place in the class away from another qualified deserving applicant.

"It also damages our reputation as an institution."

The e-mail, dated Dec. 27, says the law school is "investigating additional verification measures that could be put in place to detect cases of fraud in the admission process." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Catalyst

- A Star investigation into degree fraud revealed Osgoode student Quami Frederick to have used a degree purchased from a diploma mill on the Internet to get accepted into the program in 2006.

ShareYourViews

torontoletters@metronews.ca

News in brief

BOXING A man who once coached world heavyweight champ Lennox Lewis to an Olympic gold is spending the night behind bars, accused of sexually assaulting a 21-year-old boxing trainee. Adrian Teodorescu made a brief appearance in a Toronto courtroom yesterday. He is charged with eight counts of sexual assault, two counts of forcible confinement, threatening death, assault and criminal harassment against a woman under his boxing tutelage.

CHARGES A 36-year-old babysitter is charged with sexually assaulting a 10-year-old boy over a two-year period, and police say there may be other young victims. Toronto's Thomas Chung Tamwas arrested and charged with sexual assault, two counts of sexual interference and two counts of sexual exploitation. Police said the suspect was "involved with many families. He has exposure to children, so we are concerned there are other victims." TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Cancon suggestions for Obama's IPod
Barack Obama needs some Canadian content for his IPod. So says CBC Radio 2, which is inviting Canadians to select songs that best define Canada for the incoming U.S. leader, known to be an avid music fan. Metro's movie critic Richard Crouse says BTO's Takin' Care of Business would offer inspiration. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canada

Avalanche warnings ignored

There was a warning of "considerable avalanche danger" in the area where two avalanches buried eight snowmobilers in southeastern B.C. on Sunday. But such warnings have no legal force, and the allure of deep powder and awesome scenery often proves irresistible to snowmobilers eager to explore the seemingly endless sprawl of mountains throughout the province. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Jean has 'realistic' message

Governor General comments on what lies ahead for Canada

There is every reason for Canadians to hope for a bright new year, but they should also be aware of the considerable challenges they face in 2009, says Gov. Gen. Michaëlle Jean.

Canada is not immune to the global recession, she says in her year-end message, and its inhabitants must be aware of what lies ahead.

"Let us be realistic," she says in the pre-recorded message.

> **"What these recent events bring to light is how important it is for us to work together — nations, governments, societies, businesses, organizations, individuals — side-by-side,"**
> Gov. Gen. Michaëlle Jean

"The challenges are considerable and have caused a great deal of anxiety."

As part of her message, Jean also made a brief mention of the unprecedented political crisis that the country faced in late 2008 that saw the minority federal Conservative government reach the brink of collapse.

Jean also lamented the escalating number of deaths of Canadian soldiers in Afghanistan, which surpassed the 100 mark in early December.

Those deaths, along with the looming recession and political upheaval, have shown how important it is for everyone to work together to make the country and the world a better place, she said.

"What these recent events bring to light is how important it is for us to work together — nations, governments, societies, businesses, organizations, individuals — side-by-side," she said.

"The fend-for-yourself mentality has no place in an interdependent world, where the decisions of some have a profound impact on the lives of others."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Snowstorms practice for 2010 Games

AIRPORT Thousands of airline passengers stranded. Roads impassable because of snow. Power failures by the dozen.

The last two weeks have been a winter weather nightmare for Vancouver, with huge dumps of snow followed by rain, heavy slush and flooding.

All over the city, people are griping about the toll storm after storm has taken on their holiday season.

But they're asking a question, too: What if it happens during the 2010 Winter Olympics?

Vancouver airport, transit and city officials say they're using the recent storms as a learning opportunity for Games planning.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Stepfather doubts claims of suicide

FATALITY The stepfather of a 25-year-old Ontario woman who was found dead at a resort in the Philippines where she worked as a chef is expressing doubt about the official police conclusion that her death was a suicide.

Elisa Loyo Gutierrez of Thunder Bay was found last Friday hanging from an electric cable tied to the ceiling of the chef's office at the Fontana Leisure Park in northern Pampanga province, said police Chief Insp. Rene Aspe.

Two resort workers found the body when they traced a foul odour coming from the office, which hadn't been used in several months, Aspe told The Associated Press.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Seven dead, one missing in B.C. avalanche

TRAGEDY Seven bodies were recovered yesterday from the scene of two avalanches that buried eight young men under snow in southeastern B.C.

One other men was still unaccounted for but presumed dead after the back-to-back avalanches struck 11 snowmobilers in two groups, police said.

Three other men had survived and walked to safety after the deadly slides hit on Sunday.

Police had said earlier that they still had hope for the eight men, all in their mid-20s and from nearby Sparwood, but time was not on their side.

Asked if the work had moved from search-and-rescue to a recovery operation, RCMP Cpl. Chris Faulkner said: "One would suspect that was the situation. You never want to not hold out hope about recovery, but we are looking at 24 hours after the incident."

JEFF MCINTOSH/THE CANADIAN PRESS

Volunteers with the Fernie, B.C., search-and-rescue team prepare to head out to search for eight missing snowmobilers yesterday. Seven bodies were recovered with one person still missing.

Search efforts had been delayed by the need to bomb snow in the area to reduce the chance of more avalanches impeding rescuers. About 25 trained rescue personnel and 25 volunteers were at the site along with two RCMP dogs.

Roads into the area were virtually impassable, further delaying search efforts.

With darkness descending, search efforts ended for the day and will resume this morning.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

News in brief

CRIME An Iraq-born Canadian citizen picked up at the U.S. border was charged with conspiring to spy for late Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. Mouyad Mahmoud Darwish, 47, is expected to appear in a Buffalo court today.

SAVINGS Canadians will get to open a new type of tax-free savings account this week.

EUTHANASIA The Crown is appealing the acquittal of a Quebec man who was found not guilty earlier this month of helping his ailing uncle commit suicide. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Airfares

LAS VEGAS $99
Travel Jan 11 - Jan 15/wg + taxes & fees $207

Fort Lauderdale $24
Travel Jan 10 - Jan 15/ts + taxes & fees $224

Orlando $24
Travel Jan 11 - Jan 18/ts + taxes & fees $224

Jamaica $95
Travel Jan 20 - Jan 27/wg + taxes & fees $268

Costa Rica $198
Travel Jan 22 - Jan 29/5g + taxes & fees $183

Lima $397
Travel Feb 09 - Feb 23/ac + taxes & fees $376

Holidays

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INCLUDES roundtrip airfare and 7 nights 3-star accom near *Walt Disney World* Resort in Orlando. Departs Jan 11/inf/ts. **ADD** 6-day *Magic Your Way* Base Ticket from $276.

Las Vegas 4 Nights **$235**
Circus Circus + taxes & fees $230
INCLUDES roundtrip airfare and 4 nights 3-star accom on the Las Vegas Strip. Departs Jan 11/swg/wg. **UPGRADE** to 4-star Monte Carlo from $13 per night. **UPGRADE** to 5-star Mirage from $28 per night.

Québec City Weekend **$399**
Fairmont Chateau Frontenac + taxes & fees $75
INCLUDES roundtrip airfare and 2 nights Fairmont accom in the heart of Old Québec overlooking the St. Lawrence River. Departs select Fridays in Jan/inf/ws.

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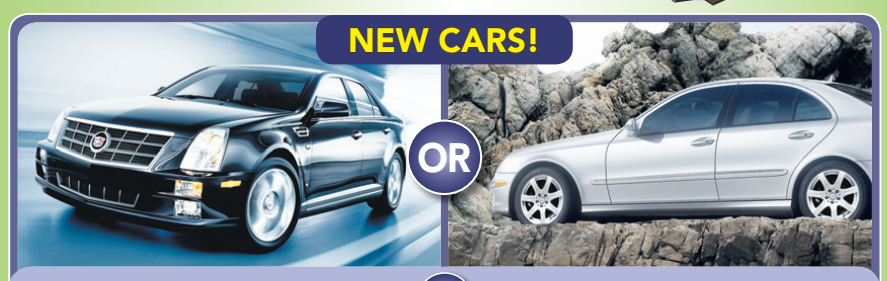

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Big turnout in Bangladesh's first general election in seven years

4 Tens of millions of Bangladeshis cast ballots yesterday in a vote aimed at restoring democracy to the troubled country. Election results are not expected before today. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

World

Hundreds of illegals feared drowned off Indian coast

Nearly 300 illegal immigrants are missing and feared dead off India's eastern coast after they jumped from a rickety boat that had been drifting for 13 days and tried to swim to shore, an official said yesterday. Authorities rescued 102 others on the boat.

Rescuers were searching for the missing people in the waters near the Andaman Islands, where they were believed to have jumped overboard, said Vijay Singh, an Indian Coast Guard spokesman.

Roughly 300 people from Bangladesh and Myanmar had tried to swim to the Andaman Islands by the time Indian officials found the boat and its 102 remaining passengers Saturday, he said.

The rescued people were brought to Port Blair, the Andaman capital, Singh said.

The Andamans are a remote chain of Indian islands, 1,370 kilometres off India's east coast. They lie closer to Thailand and Myanmar.

The survivors said they had been detained by the Thai authorities for illegally entering Thai waters before they were sent back out to sea, Singh said.

Police Lt.-Gen Chatchawal Suksomjit, commander of Thailand Immigration Office, disputed that claim.

"Thai immigration office will never send illegal immigrants back to their countries by putting them back in the boat then let them go," Chatchawal said. "Normally, when we arrest them, we will send them back through immigration checkpoints along the border."

Poor Bangladeshis often pay hundreds of dollars per person to trafficking syndicates to carry them to Thailand or Malaysia to search for better jobs. They often travel in dangerous boats that have been known to capsize and sink.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Refugees

- The Bangladeshis are sometimes joined by Myanmar refugees, mostly Muslims known as Rohingyas, who have fled Myanmar's military junta for Bangladesh.

Pakistan moves to calm jitters

ISLAMABAD Pakistan's army chief stressed yesterday the need to avoid conflict with India, days after he ordered troops toward the border amid tensions following last month's terrorist attacks on Mumbai.

Gen. Ashfaq Parvez Kayani made the remarks to a top Chinese diplomat who was visiting Islamabad to try to ease the situation between nuclear-armed Pakistan and India.

Kayani's remarks were believed to be his first about the tensions with Pakistan's traditional rival and could help reassure a jittery region that the country does not intend to escalate the crisis further.

On Friday, Pakistani intelligence officials said thousands of troops were being moved toward the Indian border, though there has been no sign yet of a major buildup at the frontier. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Hezbollah Protesting Israeli strikes

MAHMOUD TAWIL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Lebanese women from Hezbollah wave Palestinian, Lebanese and yellow Hezbollah flags during a protest in Dahiyeh, Lebanon, yesterday. Tens of thousands of Hezbollah supporters stood in pouring rain to protest Israel's air assault on the Gaza Strip.

Incest victim, kids leave clinic

VIENNA A lawyer says Josef Fritzl's daughter and her children have left the psychiatric clinic where they were recovering from their incest ordeal.

Christoph Herbst says the woman and six of the seven children Fritzl fathered with her while holding her captive for 24 years have moved into their own home at an undisclosed location.

Herbst announced the family's move in an interview today with the Austria Press Agency.

Prosecutors in November charged 73-year-old Fritzl with murder for refusing to arrange medical treatment for the seventh child, who died in infancy.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

News in brief

ALASKA The 18-year-old daughter of Alaska Gov. Sarah Palin has given birth to a son. People magazine reports Bristol Palin gave birth to Tripp Easton Mitchell Johnston on Sunday. He weighed seven pounds, four ounces. The father is Levi Johnston.

WASHINGTON Greater use of bullet-resistant vests and stun guns helped reduce police deaths in the U.S. in 2008 compared with the previous year, two law enforcement support groups said. Law-enforcement officer deaths in the line of duty totalled 140.

MOGADISHU Somalia's president, Abdullahi Yusuf, resigned yesterday after a four-year term in which his Western-backed government failed to extend its power throughout a country crippled by infighting and a strengthening Islamic insurgency. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Comment & Views

Comment

What's on Canada's vine for 2009

NationalReport

After the bizarre twists and turns of 2008, it's a hazardous business to try to decipher what will happen in '09.

But why not try?

The economy will continue its downward spiral, but won't reach depression levels. By year's end, there will be signs of recovery.

Barack Obama will enjoy a honeymoon most of the year. He will be bold on domestic reform but will be slow in implementing a change agenda abroad.

His foreign policy team is centrist. It doesn't think outside the box.

But the change to President Obama in combination with the leftward tilt of the times will increase the appetite for change here.

Michael Ignatieff therefore starts off the year better-positioned than Stephen Harper. Though he is 61, Iggy is a fresh political force, having only been in the game for a few years.

Mr. Harper has been around for three elections. His style grates.

But, count out the idea of the Liberals moving to form a coalition government. Those governments have worked in Europe. They are more representative of public opinion than single-party governance. But the Conservative campaign, overstating the Bloc's involvement, turned public opinion solidly against a coalition. Iggy won't try to change that perception.

He will likely approve the Harper budget at the end of January and won't seek to topple the government at least until the fall.

The big mystery for 2009 is the question of Stephen Harper's future. Though improving his standing in the last campaign, he missed his best opportunity to ever win a majority.

Then, with his foolish economic statement, he set his own house on fire.

His party members don't like him, but they fear him. They won't make a move to dump him yet.

But instead of pushing ahead and risking defeat against a stronger Liberal leader and the cold winds of recession, Stephen Harper may well decide that the time has come to step down.

Despite the animosity he has generated, this is a prime minister who could leave with a winning record and his party in good condition.

That's something not many Conservative leaders have been able to say.

Lawrence Martin is a Globe and Mail correspondent and author who writes about national affairs from Ottawa.

Views

A cooking kid will have a tasty future

David Rocco
Host of Dolce Vita

When Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty's office called and asked me to get involved in a pilot project aimed at getting teens to eat better, I was honoured and jumped at the chance.

I think it's a really important issue. But I didn't want to be just a poster boy for eating healthy — that's a recipe for failure.

I believe the key is to empower teens and teach them how to cook as opposed to telling them what to eat.

I think we need to get teens excited about food and to make cooking a part of their curriculum, like math and science.

To me, it's a no-brainer: Cooking is an important life skill that all kids should have.

I've seen what happens when kids cook — they have fun, they're active and not sitting in front the TV or a computer.

It's a way for them to be creative and, probably most importantly, to gain more confidence in themselves.

I believe that kids who cook will naturally want to eat better and will sit down to spend time with their family over a meal.

Being the son of Italian immigrants, I grew up with a Mediterranean diet — foods that were nutritious and didn't cost a lot.

In fact, many of our family meals cost less to make for all five of us than it would have for even one of us to eat at a fast food restaurant.

Getting your kids involved in eating well is easier than you think.

Start with simple tasks like getting them to peel potatoes or chop onions.

A simple tomato sauce is probably the easiest way to give your kids the confidence to start their own journeys in the kitchen.

Try this: Get a large can of peeled plum tomatoes and pour them into a big bowl.

Have your kids squeeze the tomatoes with their bare hands until they get to a consistency that the kids like.

In a large frying pan, heat up a little bit of extra virgin olive oil, and sauté a couple of cloves of garlic, or a chopped onion, until slightly brown.

Add in the squished tomatoes and let it all simmer for ten minutes. Sprinkle with salt and pepper to taste.

The sauce will be ready by the time your pasta is done cooking.

Total cost of the meal for four? About four bucks. Time spent in the kitchen with your kids?

Priceless!

David Rocco stars in the Food Network show David Rocco's Dolce Vita and recently released a cookbook of the same title. Visit him online at davidrocco.com

Letters

Do the math on GO transit before voicing complaint

Re: Go Transit increase a decrease for some?

I read this article, and a rider who goes to Scarborough every day is wondering why she has so few trains to choose from.

Well, for starters, she failed to realize the difference in riding time or the number of riders from Oshawa, Whitby or Ajax.

Sure, you have to wait 30 minutes for your next train, but the ride home is 10 minutes. So, in actual fact, we basically get home at the same time, as I ride to Ajax which takes about 40 minutes on a good day.

So, instead of complaining about getting the short end of the stick, try moving farther away from the city and see how you like it.

TOM LUCAS, SCARBOROUGH

Police resources can be better used in Toronto

Sunday there were traffic lights that were not working "all over the city," as an officer from traffic services said to me over the phone. I am a new resident of Toronto and I do respect the police of Toronto and their work.

However, I am outraged at the way that they are handling this situation. At the police station on the corner of Eglinton and Kennedy, which is a major intersection, the officer said that they "didn't have enough officers to cover" intersections where lights aren't working.

They gladly show up in crowds when they are fishing for driving offenders and distributing tickets. There are also gangs of officers downtown during the weekend in the club district.

I'm no city planner, but I pay my taxes and it seems to me that the city is not using its resources or our hard earned money appropriately.

AHMED MEHANI, TORONTO

Metro fails chemistry class

Re: 3 sent to hospital after inhaling CO2

CO2 is carbon dioxide, not monoxide. Please have your writers check their basic chemistry.

DAWN THOMPSON, OAKVILLE

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: torontoletters@metronews.ca
Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number – street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

Pound falls to record lows amid gloomy forecasts

The British pound fell to a record low against the euro yesterday, flirting with one pound per euro as two gloomy economic forecasts stoked expectations that the Bank of England will make further interest rate cuts next year. The pound fell to just 1.022 euros yesterday, its lowest since the euro's 1999 launch. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Business

DOLLAR

0.63¢	C$	82.07¢ US
	US$	$1.2184

OIL

$40.02 US	
$2.31	

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Insurers' losses rose by half in 2008

DISASTER Insurers' losses from natural disasters rose by about 50 per cent in 2008, with hurricanes Ike and Gustav powering the increase, Munich Re AG said yesterday. The industry's insured losses totalled $45 billion US this year, up from $30 billion in 2007.

It said total economic losses, including losses not covered by insurance, swelled to $200 billion from last year's $82 billion. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dow Chemical's fall trips Wall St.

U.S. stocks fell yesterday as the collapse of a joint venture between Kuwait and Dow Chemical threatened to unravel one of the larger merger deals of the year and overshadowed gains in energy shares.

Dow Chemical tumbled 17 per cent the day after Kuwait decided to end a $17.4-billion US petrochemical joint venture, igniting worries the largest U.S. chemical company would not be able to buy rival Rohm & Haas.

Shares of Rohm & Haas, which Dow agreed to buy for about $15.3 billion, slid close to 16 per cent.

Chevron and Exxon Mobil led the Dow higher on rising oil prices as tensions between Israel and the Hamas-ruled Gaza Strip stoked concerns about Middle East crude supplies.

Trading was expected to be light this week, shortened by the New Year's holiday. The market has been unable to mount a year-end rally that many investors had hoped for. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

TSX up 3.9%

- The Toronto Stock Exchange's S&P/TSX composite index surged 326.74 points or 3.9 per cent to 8,637.29.
- Its performance was bolstered by materials and energy sectors as tensions in the Middle East boosted oil and gold prices.

Japan **Leftovers from closings**

KOJI SASAHARA/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Used office equipment, including copiers and desks, fill a storage unit on the outskirts of Tokyo yesterday. Office Buster, a firm that resells used office equipment, is stocking up inventory from companies that have recently gone under.

Business in brief

B.C. Negotiations resumed yesterday to try to avert a possible strike that could halt millions of dollars worth of imports and exports that flow through British Columbia's ports. About 450 ship and dock foremen, members of local 514, could go on strike as early as Friday. About 5,000 more workers are expected to walk off the job in support. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Your Money

EDITOR: NINA DRAGICEVIC, NINA.DRAGICEVIC@METRONEWS.CA

Interest rates/Savings accounts METRO NEWS SERVICES

BMO	CIBC	ICICI	ING	PCF	RBC	Scotia	TD
0.75%	0.2%	2.5%	2.7%	2.75%	2.5%	2.6%	0.05%

Note: Please check bank websites as some rates require a minimum account balance.

Budgets are restrictive, focused on deprivation, and they don't work. Instead, resolve to create a Spending Plan that will guide you to reaching your goals.

Shine in 2009

SmartCookies

smartcookies.com

It's easy enough to write down your New Year's resolutions, but sticking to them throughout the year is another story. So we're letting you in on a few items to add to your list and helping you figure out how to make them stick.

Just Say NO to Budgets

Surprised to hear us say that? Budgets are restrictive, focused on deprivation, and they don't work. Instead, resolve to create a Spending Plan that will guide you to reaching your goals. Do yourself a favour and set aside one hour a week (yup, just once a week) to review your spending for the past week and check in with your goals for the week ahead. Visit smartcookies.com to create a spending plan you'll actually look forward to using.

Prioritize your Debts

Make a list of what you owe by highest to lowest interest rates. Then start to chip away. Make the focus of this year working towards becoming debt-free. If your credit card is a dangerous weapon, then hide it away, tuck it in your underwear drawer or freeze it in a block of ice. Resolve to use your card for emergency purchases only or if you know you can pay the balance off in full at the end of every month.

Find Hidden Money

How thrilled would you be if you were walking down the street and found $100 on the sidewalk!? Well, we guarantee you that if you resolved to find $100 this January that you could do it. A few places to start: Scan your cellphone bill for overcharges, negotiate discounts or take a closer look at your credit card statements and get rid of extra insurance and administrative charges. Raid your closet and consign your clothes. You'll be surprised how much money is right under your nose.

Give yourself Permission to Spend

Deprivation is not sustainable so choose six things that you love to spend your money on: Entertaining with friends, going out for lunch one day a week, taking your son/daughter to the movies on the weekend, etc. Give yourself permission to spend on things you love and it will be much easier to weed out the expenses in your life you don't mind getting rid of. However, the key is to set aside a set amount each week or month and only spend that allotted amount.

Give yourself permission to spend on things you love and it will be much easier to weed out the expenses in your life you don't mind getting rid of.

Start or Join Money Group

Getting together on a regular basis with others to talk about money matters and have people to hold you accountable will help you stick to your resolutions and achieve your goals that much faster. Plus, working with a group to achieve financial freedom is more fun then doing it solo!

Visit smartcookies.com to find money groups in your area.

You can contact us at smartcookies@metronews.ca. Happy New Year!

Tune in Wednesday night at 9 p.m. EST/PST on the W Network and be sure to visit smartcookies.com for more tips.

MoneyMatters

Henry Choo Chong

WILL RETURN

Investing

Allan Small

WILL RETURN

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Marinelli, Mangini and Crennel fired

The day after the NFL season ended brought the end of three coaching tenures yesterday, as the winless Detroit Lions fired Rod Marinelli, the New York Jets parted ways with Eric Mangini and the Cleveland Browns let go Romeo Crennel. The Dallas Cowboys, meanwhile, said that coach Wade Phillips will return next season. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Sports

Raptors look to even it out

Chris Bosh and the Raptors went into last night's game against Golden State in Oakland needing a win to even out their record on their six-game road swing to 3-3. For a complete game recap, visit www.metronews.ca/sports.

JOHN.CHICK@METRONEWS.CA

World juniors **That's one**

THE CANADIAN PRESS/ADRIAN WYLD

Canada's Zach Boychuk celebrates after scoring the opening goal against Team Germany in the first period last night in Ottawa. Canada won 5-1.

Last year's squad named '08 team of the year

AWARDS Canada's junior hockey team won The Canadian Press team of the year award yesterday like it captured the gold medal at the 2008 world junior championship: It came right down to the wire.

The Canadians beat Sweden 3-2 in overtime Jan. 5 in Pardubice, Czech Republic, to win a fourth straight gold medal.

In a survey of sports editors and broadcasters across the country, the junior squad trailed the men's Olympic eight rowing crew for team of the year honours until a late surge.

The Grey Cup-champion Calgary Stampeders were third with 102 points.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Argos to get T.O. coach

YorkReport

Marty York

marty.york@metronews.ca

A Toronto native is the Argonauts' newest head coach, sources have told Metro.

According to the sources, including one at CFL headquarters, Mike Benevides has all but officially dotted the I's and crossed the T's on a contract with the Argos and will be introduced as their coach at a media conference either this week or next.

"It's essentially a done deal and it's just a matter now of choosing the best possible time to announce it," one of the sources said.

"They (the Argos) are looking for maximum media exposure so they'll probably wait till the holidays are over. But it's safe to report that Mike will be coaching in Toronto in 2009."

Regular Metro readers won't be surprised. It was reported first in this space on Nov. 12 that Benevides would be offered the Argos' job if Michael (Pinball) Clemons rejected ownership's wish for him to leave the club's presidential office and return as coach. Clemons decided against a coaching comeback and so club management prepared a list of coaching candidates, with Benevides right at the top of it.

For the past nine seasons, Benevides has been an assistant coach in the CFL. Last season, he was the B.C. Lions' defensive co-ordinator and his unit excelled, with seven Western all-stars.

Benevides will be the Argos' first Canadian head coach since Hall of Famer Russ Jackson in 1976.

Sources suggest Benevides is highly touted by Argos co-owner David Cynamon. Both studied business at York University.

• The Blue Jays were diligently pursuing Milton Bradley until last week, when they heard through the grapevine that the free-agent slugger would be signing for megabucks with the Chicago Cubs.

But hold on. Adam Dunn, who has hit 40-plus home runs in five consecutive seasons, is trying to persuade the Cubs to sign him for their right-field vacancy instead of Bradley. Despite Dunn's defensive deficiencies, the Cubs might bite, which would mean a Toronto-to-Bradley connection is still possible, although other clubs, including the Tampa Bay Rays, covet him as well.

• So get this:

Rutgers runs a planned play in a U.S. college bowl game yesterday in which the quarterback throws a behind-the-line pass to a 6-foot-7, 320-pound offensive lineman, who then turns around and fires a forward pass into the end zone to a receiver.

The pass was incomplete.

Wasn't even close, actually, prompting ESPN analyst Shaun King to emerge with this gem: "This is what happens when an offensive co-ordinator has too much time on his hands waiting for a bowl game."

Floyd to Ti-Cats

• Veteran CFL linebacker Otis Floyd, released recently by the B.C. Lions, will sign as a free agent this week with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, sources have told Metro sports columnist Marty York.

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Sports in brief

NHL Former Montreal Canadiens star Jean Beliveau was admitted to hospital yesterday after a drop in blood pressure but the team said his condition was "fine." Beliveau, 77, was attending the funeral of a friend when he felt uneasy, the team said Beliveau retired in 1971 after an illustrious career in which he scored 507 goals and won 10 Stanley Cups.

Jean Beliveau

SOCCER Liverpool captain Steven Gerrard has been charged by police with assault over a brawl outside a bar that left a disk jockey hospitalized with facial injuries. Police announced the charge early today, 24 hours after Gerrard was arrested while celebrating Liverpool's 5-1 win at Newcastle on Sunday. Police said Gerrard was charged with assault and occasioning actual bodily harm.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Cherepanov took PEDs: Officials

HOCKEY Blood and urine samples show former hockey star Alexei Cherepanov took performance-enhancing drugs, Russian investigators said in a statement yesterday.

Cherepanov, 19, collapsed Oct. 13 while on the bench for Omsk club Avangard in the KHL.

The player, a top prospect of the NHL's New York Rangers, died a short time later.

Russia's federal Investigative Committee said a chemical analysis of the samples allowed experts to conclude "that for several months Alexei Cherepanov engaged in doping." A spokeswoman at the committee refused to specify the drugs that Cherepanov allegedly took.

The statement also said Cherepanov suffered from myocarditis, a condition where not enough blood gets to the heart, and the Russian should not have been playing pro hockey.

The club's medical team might carry legal liability in the episode, the statement added.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Health & Beauty

EDITOR: ANN-MARIE COLACINO, ANN-MARIE.COLACINO@METRONEWS.CA

Diet heavy on nuts helps lower blood sugar

FOOD Type 2 diabetics who eat a diet rich in slower-to-digest foods like nuts, beans and lentils have better blood-sugar control and a lower risk of cardiovascular disease, compared with those whose diets rely more heavily on cereal-fibre foods, researchers suggest.

In a study of 210 people with Type 2 diabetes, University of Toronto researchers had half of the participants eat a low glycemic-index diet that emphasized beans, peas, lentils, nuts, pasta, parboiled rice, slow-to-digest breads like pumpernickel and cereals such as large-flake oatmeal. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Less dining out

People intend to change eating habits: Report

A new report on eating patterns suggests that people in a majority of Canadian households were planning to cut down on dining out.

Eighty-eight per cent of respondents in the report from NPD Group said they intended to decrease the amount of time spent eating in restaurants. The surveys were mainly conducted up to and including March 2008, before the economic downturn began hitting Canada in a big way.

But Marion Chan of the NPD Group said that even though people may intend to cut back on eating out, they've come to rely on premade foods so much that they're not going to be able to do it.

"So what they'll have to do is trade down," she said.

"If they normally went to what we call a casual dining establishment, they might trade down to something that's more family oriented."

"Or they may opt for just going to the grocery store, buying one of the roast chickens that's completely prepared and then taking it home and eating it."

That way, they would be spending less than they did in the past, she said, but still enjoying a prepared meal.

The findings also suggest that 59 per cent of Canadians are more conscious about the nutritional value of what they're eating than they were three years ago. And 67 per cent of respondents noted that nutrition is an important concern as they prepare their evening meal.

A growing number of people are consuming whole-grain foods, trans fat-free items and low-fat items on a weekly basis.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Forgotten meals

- Lunch is the most often skipped meal of the day, the report said. When it is consumed, sandwiches are the top food, at 44 per cent.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

A new study shows that the majority of Canadians plan to dine out less in the new year, but that they rely on grocery store convenience foods.

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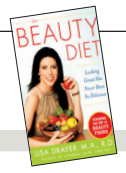
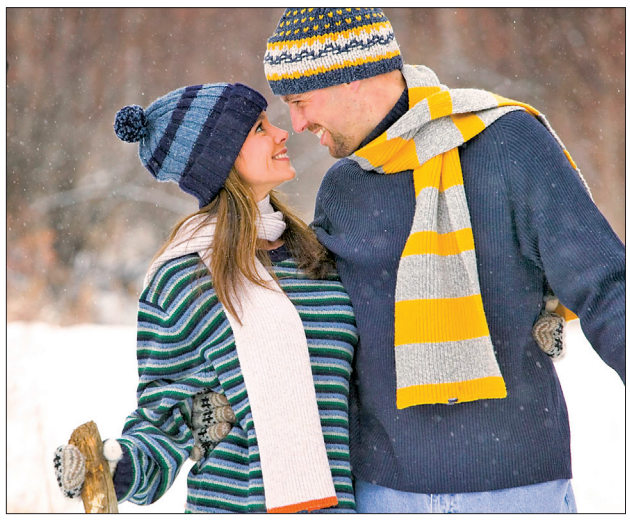


Eat your way to beauty
Author and nutritionist Lisa Drayer reveals the top 10 beauty foods as well as recipes and a meal plan in her new book The Beauty Diet: Looking Great has Never Been So Delicious. Available at Chatpers. METRO

The focus is on relationships for '09


Instead of a planned date, spice things up by venturing out together without a plan. Just make it up as you go.

Forget resolving to lose 10 pounds. According to myGoals.com, when it comes to New Year's Resolutions health is out, relationships are in.

Based on a random sample of goals people set on the site, 2009 resolutions related to career and travel/recreation are expected to decline by three to five per cent, whereas resolutions related to family/relationships, home improvement and getting organized are expected to increase by three to five per cent.

The site's CEO Greg Helmstetter says the economic climate is no doubt a big factor.

"People want to get back to basics. This is not the year they're going to get in shape, buy the house, or travel the world," says Helmstetter. "This is the year they're going to get more sleep, reduce their stress, and spend more time with family and significant others."

But while it's one thing to make a vague resolution to spend more time with your partner, why not make your relationship resolutions more specific:

Listen. Stop worrying about being right and really listen to what your partner is saying. Imagine there is a bouncing ball (like in the cartoons) over your partner's words. Then follow the bouncing ball, to ensure you're really focusing on what he or she is saying and not simply busy formulating a rebuttal.

Expose yourself. Start a weekly sexual revelation ritual: You show me one thing you like or don't like and I'll show you mine.

Indulge one another. Do something sexually for your partner he or she is into that maybe you're not. Not only does indulging your partner make them feel special and loved, you may surprise yourself and discover things you never knew you'd get into.

Have a play date. Instead of the planned date where you hire a sitter, make reservations at a stuffy restaurant and sit across from each other feeling the pressure to reconnect, hire a sitter for the day and walk out the door together without a plan. A walk in the park, followed by a museum visit, greasy street hot dogs and an later afternoon cocktail together. Make it up as you go.

Turn off the TV. If I hear one more couple complain they never have time for sex only to find out that they do have time to watch three hours of crap TV every night, I'll scream. Switch it off. Or at least do it in front of the TV.

Be nice. Every day, make a point of giving your partner one positive compliment and at least one physical display of affection, be it a hug, a warm kiss or a full body massage.

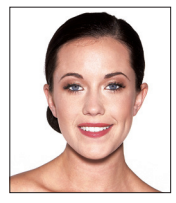
Don't be goal oriented. Despite all this talk of setting goals, goals can be overrated, especially in the bedroom where pressure to get to the big goal can sometimes take all the fun out of the jostling to get there.

Happy New Year's!

Josey Vogels is a sex and relationship columnist and author of five books on the subjects. For more info, visit joseyvogels.com.

Beauty in brief

SKINCARE Tips to prevent and care for severely dry skin:



- Make sure to wash clothing in mild detergents and avoid bleach and fabric softeners.
- Eat a well-balanced diet that includes healthy fats. Fatty acids such as omega 3s are the building blocks of your skin's natural, moisture-retaining oil barrier. Flax, walnuts and safflower oil, as well as cold-water fish such as tuna and sardines are good sources of omega 3s.
- Exposing skin to very hot or very cold water can affect the skin's moisture levels and exacerbate dry skin. Only shower when necessary to limit moisture loss.
- Exfoliate your skin gently with a soft cloth or scrub to rid your skin of old cells so that moisturizer can penetrate deeper.

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London introduces bylaws for student tenants
The City of London is introducing new bylaws applying to student tenants living anywhere in the city. New or revised bylaws will cover noise, nuisance, and rental housing licensing. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

Steinway only
The University of Victoria has partnered with Steinway & Sons to establish the university as Canada's first All-Steinway School, meaning that Steinway-designed pianos will be available in all practice rooms, studios, and concert halls. METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: DOUGLAS DUNLOP, DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

A citizen reporter for all seasons

Small Business

ROBYN YOUNG
for Metro Canada

Much to the chagrin of university-trained journalists the world over, citizen journalism may finally be making its way to the forefront of mainstream media.

DigitalJournal.com is a Toronto-based news site that relies solely on citizen journalists to report the news.

What legitimizes the content is the fact the founders and editors are bonafide j-school grads.

David Silverberg and Chris Hogg are two of the five 20-something editors behind the scenes at DigitalJournal who work tirelessly day in and day out to ensure the news content on their site is reliable and accurate.

VINUKUMAR RANGANATHAN PHOTO

DigitalJournal.com published this image and others of the Mumbai terrorist attacks at the end of November.

"We really stress quality on our website, we want really good writers who are passionate about the English language too," said Silverberg, a Ryerson journalism school graduate and former freelance journalist.

The project began as a magazine called Digital Journal and morphed into DigitalJournal.com about two years ago, he said.

"We decided to move only to the online sphere and focus on citizen journalism once we saw how huge our site had become in attracting all these users from all these different countries," he said.

The site now publishes the work of citizen reporters from 140 countries.

When the recent Mumbai terrorist attacks began, DigitalJournal.com was one of the first news sites to upload text and photos covering the chaos.

Silverberg said with thousands of reporters all over the world, reporting on issues just for the love of journalism, the site can have content within minutes of any major event.

"They want to be sure that what is published is accurate," said Bart B. Van Bockstaele, a Toronto-based citizen journalist.

He said he appreciates the way Silverberg and his team run the site because it legitimizes the work in spite of the fact the reporters aren't professionally trained.

"You don't have to be a j-school graduate to tell a story effectively," said Silverberg.

Through a voting system, they can earn a bit of extra pocket cash because the company shares its advertising revenues with its reporters.

Depending on how many articles a member writes a month and how many votes their pieces get through the website's voting system, they can make anywhere from $10 to a couple of hundred dollars a month.

Web 3.0

- DigitalJournal is an example of Web 3.0 where users interact with and produce content, said David Silverberg.

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Polish performance

An audience of almost 3,000 clapped and cheered as Woody Allen and his jazz band gave their first ever concert in Poland on Sunday. The filmmaker, playing the clarinet, rarely performs in large venues or outside New York City. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Entertainment

Now presenting

Dustin Hoffman, Dennis Hopper, Dakota Fanning and Sarah Silverman are set to join the star-studded list of presenters at the Critics' Choice Awards.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

O Canada: A musical roadtrip

CHELSEA MIYA
for Metro Canada

Eighth grade history class might seem like the last place you'd expect a future rock star to find inspiration. But it was one barrel-chested teacher's enthusiastic stories about Canadian figures like Louis Riel that helped spur the imagination of a young Mark Sasso.

Today, the frontman for critically acclaimed Toronto alt-country outfit Elliott Brood is capturing the attention of fans worldwide with his epic revival of old world Canadian heroes on his band's sophomore LP Mountain Meadows, which was released in June. "I was never a math whiz," said Sasso. "Stories always spoke to me. It gives you an identity. Knowing what your ties are, you feel a kindred spirit with your country. You're already Canadian, but you feel it that much more."

After wrapping up a North America touring stint Elliott Brood is set for a series of gigs in France and the Netherlands.

If you go

- Elliott Brood performs at Lee's Palace on New Year's Eve.

Elliott Brood can best be described as folk-rock seared with some country flavour and peppered with, "The soul of Motown and the heavier stuff from Detroit," according to Sasso. The influence for such sound came from the experience of growing up in Windsor, Ont. as well as the inevitable influences that come from spending lengthy periods of time on the road. "You try to take it in and be a part of it in some way," said Sasso. "Our new album was influenced by everything from Henry Ford to small town ghost stories to family history. It's almost like acting. You put yourself into a different character and imagine how they would react."

Fireside storytellers armed with banjos, ukuleles and harmonicas, trekking across Canada and picking up bits of local history along the way, the men behind Elliott Brood — Sasso, guitarist Casey Laforet and drummer Stephen Pitkincould — could easily be described as modern frontiersmen.

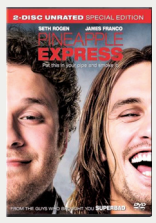
Crying out from beneath Sasso's face-twisting bluegrass howl is the heartbeat of Canada's old frontier: Greasy boots stomping on a dusty cabin floor, the wheezy whistle of a train, the clank-clank of railway workers driving stakes into the ground, the creak of a wooden wheel, the slosh of mud, the whisper of prairie grass. It's history coming to life through music.

DVD picks

Pineapple Express

Director: David Gordon Green
Rating: 18A

SETH ROGEN and James Franco take the high road as potheads on the lam in this action comedy hit. The movie is available in single-disc and two-disc DVD releases and on Blu-ray, with extended and alternate footage, a making-of segment and commentary with producer Judd Apatow and Rogen, who also co-wrote the screenplay. The two-disc DVD set and Blu-ray disc have both the R-rated theatrical release and an unrated extended version, along with a digital copy of the movie for portable video players. Other extras on the Blu-ray and two-disc DVD set include deleted scenes and about a dozen behind-the-scenes segments.



Righteous Kill

Directors: Jon Avnet
Rating: R

HEAT ADVERSARIES Robert De Niro and Al Pacino reunite, this time on the same side of the law as veteran New York City police detectives tracking a vigilante serial killer whose methods force the cops to re-examine a case they thought they'd solved years earlier. The DVD and two-disc Blu-ray set have two background featurettes and commentary with director Jon Avnet.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

On the web

- Read more DVD reviews online at metronews.ca

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Happy couple

House of Payne actor Lance Gross is set to marry the Young and the Restless star Eva Marcille. Gross reportedly popped the question on Christmas Day to model-turned-actress Marcille, who won America's Next Top Model in 2003. **FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK**

Fox isn't that quick after all

Network's usual barrage of new ideas has slowed down to a trickle

IntelleVision

FOX ON THE RUN: While no one really holds out a lot of hope for the original Big Three networks, the conventional wisdom is that Fox, the upstart that made the Three into Four, will be agile enough to weather both the economic downturn and the harrowing changes happening in the way we watch TV. (Harrowing, of course, if you're a broadcast network.)

Or maybe not. The network is looking uncharacteristically slow with the barrage of new and controversial ideas that have always been its trademark.

In an interview with the Los Angeles Times, Fox Entertainment Chairman Peter Liguori and President Kevin Reilly (ex-NBC) talked up their midwinter lineup with less than scintillating results.

"In terms of making tweaks to, let's call it the Top 36," Liguori said of American Idol, returning for its eighth season, "It's a little bit of going back to the future. We've done that in the past, and it really has worked. It somewhat heightens the drama around those Hollywood episodes." Somewhat? One hopes so.

"By nature, this show has a particular kind of audience," Reilly said of Dollhouse, a new sci-fi thriller from Buffy creator Joss Whedon, which the network has slotted into the black hole of Friday night. "That's just what Joss does." Sounds like someone's got their expectations on the low side, don't you think?

It's not all dismal, though — according to the Hollywood Reporter, Fox is developing a comic drama about a quartet of female werewolves in New York City. It's being written by Michael Dougherty, whose writing credits include Superman Returns and the second X-Men film.

The title? Bitches. Good old Fox.

Rick McGinnis writes about music, movies, books and television, but not opera.

GlobalStyle

Colbert's eagle spotted

TELEVISION Delighted birders in Oregon say Stephen, Jr., a bald eagle named after Stephen Colbert of Comedy Central television's The Colbert Report, was spotted at the Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge on Dec. 24.

A photographer who saw a bald eagle with a tag and radio sent his pictures to Charlotte Anne Kisling, a well-known area birder. She discovered that A-46 is actually Stephen, Jr., whom she calls the world's most famous bald eagle.

"I've been waiting 2 1/2 years to see this eagle," said Kisling, who finally did so on Christmas Day. "I just knew eventually it would show up here."

Stephen Jr., hatched in April 2006 at the San Francisco Zoo as part of a breeding program and was released a couple of months later with a tag and GPS unit. Since then, Colbert has regularly reported on his namesake. When the bird first crossed into Canadian airspace in August 2006, Colbert noted Junior was feasting on fresh Canadian salmon, looking for Vietnam war draft dodgers and stopping terrorist pigeons from crossing the border. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

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U.S. candidates flocked to late-night TV

TELEVISION According to research from the Center for Media and Public Affairs, the 2008 U.S. presidential candidates made 110 onset appearances on late-night comedy shows — over four times more than the 2004 contenders made. **THE ASSOCIATED PRESS**

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Biel goes golfing
Jessica Biel has been taking secret golf lessons. The 26-year-old actress, who has been dating Justin Timberlake since last year, decided to take up the sport so she could spend more time with her golf fanatic boyfriend. FEMALEFIRST.CO.UK

Celebrity Buzz

Posh off the ink

TATOOS Victoria Beckham is furious with husband David for getting another tattoo, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The former Spice Girl had apparently told the soccer superstar to stop adding body art to his already heavily inked frame, the website reports, but he couldn't resist squeezing another onto his left arm.

A source said: "Victoria doesn't think David should have anymore tattoos and tried to stop him having another. She likes them but wants a bit of his skin to be left, but David went ahead with it anyway."

The tattoo — which was created by his regular artist Louis Malloy — is a biblical proverb written in Hebrew that reportedly reads: "My son, do not forget my teaching but keep my commands in your heart."

Beckham also has Victoria's name in Hindi, the number seven — his shirt number for Manchester United and England — in Roman numerals, a guardian angel across his back and a Michelangelo angel on his right arm.

METRO NEWS SERVICE

GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Nanny takes Mills to court over spray tan

ALLEGATIONS Heather Mills is being taken to court over a spray tan, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

A case has been filed against the former model by Sara Trumble, who despite being hired as a nanny to Heather and her ex-husband Sir Paul McCartney's daughter Beatrice, now five, alleges she was forced to use a tanning machine to give the naked star a bronze glow, work unreasonable hours and blow dry her employer's hair.

The website says that a spokesperson for Heather — who has reportedly refused the chance to settle the sex discrimination case out of court — said: "Heather is devastated that Sara, who Heather considered a part of her family, should choose to level these accusations at her. This claim will be vigorously defended.

"Heather is baffled and hurt. These are unsubstantiated accusations."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Kravitz craves church fellowship

RELIGION Lenny Kravitz goes to church every Sunday, according to femalefirst.co.uk

The rocker — renowned for his womanizing ways and who has previously dated Nicole Kidman and Kylie Minogue — is deeply spiritual and whenever he is at his home in Paris he always goes to a service to worship.

He said: "When I first moved to Paris I discovered an American church and found myself going there on Sundays. I think it's the sense of fellowship and connection with God that I like, it's a great way to start your day."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

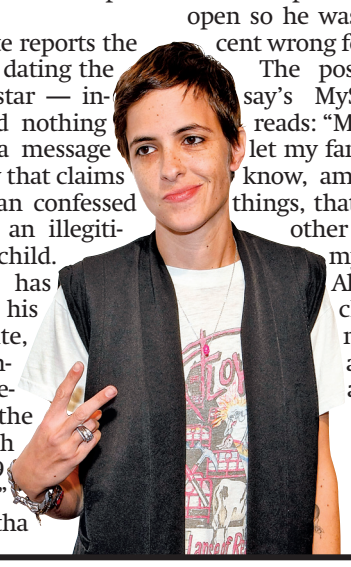
Ronson denies online accusations

MYSPACE Samantha Ronson has denied hijacking Lindsay Lohan's MySpace page to accuse the actress' father of infidelity, femalefirst.co.uk is reporting.

The website reports the DJ — who is dating the Mean Girls star — insists she had nothing to do with a message from Lindsay that claims Michael Lohan confessed to fathering an illegitimate child. Michael has launched his own website, mikelohanonline.com in response to the post, which says he is "99 per cent" sure Samantha wrote the entry. Femalefirst reports that Samantha said: "Ha! That's funny, but I don't ghost-write MySpace blogs. Good thing he left that one per cent window open so he wasn't 100 per cent wrong for once."

The post on Lindsay's MySpace page reads: "My father just let my family and me know, amongst other things, that he had another child after my little sister Aliana. He cheated on my mother and that really sucks."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Cruise wants his brood to be 10 children strong

FAMILY Actor Tom Cruise wants 10 children, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

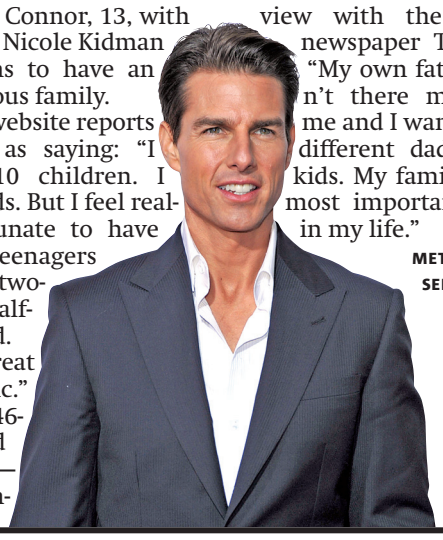
The Valkyrie star — who already has a two-year-old daughter Suri with wife Katie Holmes and two adopted children, Isabella, 16, and Connor, 13, with ex-wife Nicole Kidman — plans to have an enormous family.

The website reports Cruise as saying: "I want 10 children. I love kids. But I feel really fortunate to have the teenagers and a two-and-a-half-year-old. It's a great dynamic."

The 46-year-old star — who insists he always makes time for his children, despite his hectic acting career — is convinced his love of parenting is due to his own father not being around a lot when he was young.

He added in an interview with the British newspaper The Sun: "My own father wasn't there much for me and I want to be a different dad to my kids. My family is the most important thing in my life."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Madonna's beau a secret porn star?

RELATIONSHIPS Madonna's new boyfriend is a secret porn star, reports femalefirst.co.uk. The website says that Brazilian model Jesus Luz, 20, guest starred in an erotic movie for late-night Brazilian TV just weeks before meeting the 50-year-old singer — who is in the process of divorcing British director Guy Ritchie — at a magazine photo shoot.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Stars star suffers groin injury

DANCE Dancing with the Stars pro Mark Ballas suffered a groin injury and will have to sit out "a couple of weeks" to heal, he announced on Saturday night in Los Angeles, people.com reports.

Ballas, who won the season six DWTS mirror ball trophy with Olympic skating champion Kristi Yamaguchi last May, is on tour with the show. He grimaced in pain as he apologized to the Staples Center crowd for not being able to give his all during the performance.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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Wednesday: Variable -4° / -13°
Thursday: Mainly sunny -6° / -8°

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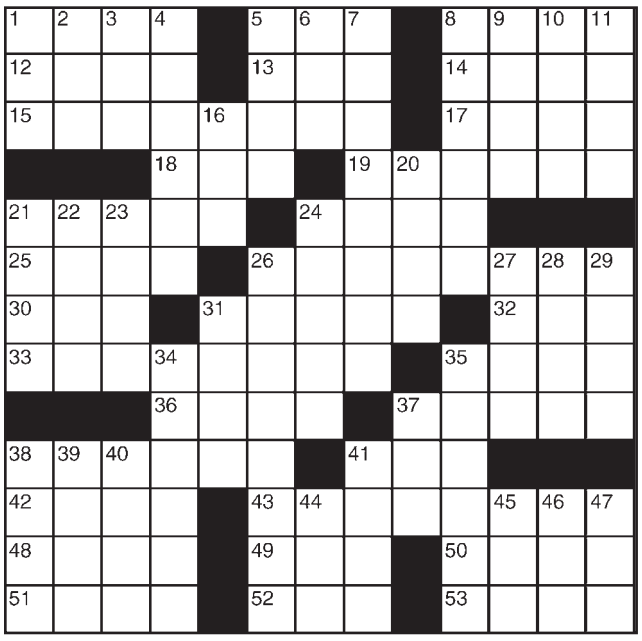
Take Five



Crossword across

1 Way off in the distance
5 Buddy
8 Hubbubs
12 Portrayal
13 Blond shade
14 "An Inconvenient Truth" name
15 Alaskan river
17 Seep
18 Multipurpose truck
19 Nerve-tissue cell
21 Urticaria
24 Hue
25 Pindar's output
26 "Billy Budd" author
30 Floral wreath
31 Colt's counterpart
32 Succor
33 Illinois city
35 Protracted
36 Clumsy boats
37 Dangerous
38 Wheeled stretcher
41 Symbol of intrigue
42 Needle case
43 Town invaded by Grinch
48 Final
49 Diving bird
50 Antelope's playmate
51 The group
52 "Of course"
53 Finished

Crossword down

1 Joan of —
2 Egg-yung connector
3 Every iota
4 Sketch shows
5 Guy
6 Deaf communication method (Abbr.)
7 Pile fabric
8 Tropical rodent
9 Entryway
10 Pasta that looks like rice
11 Spotted
16 "— My Party"
20 Jealousy
21 Retain
22 Concept
23 Blood vessel
24 Snitches
26 Our galaxy
27 Neighbor of Cambodia
28 Chain component
29 Nervous
31 Command to marksmen
34 Dressing table
35 Psychological drive
37 Clerical addr.
38 Money
39 Nevada neighbor
40 Stratagem
41 Stir-fry cookware
44 — and cry
45 Third O.T. book
46 Grant's opponent
47 Mess up

Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

9			7	3	4			1
	3				8	7		
				5				
3		6					5	
	8	4				6	2	
	1					9		4
				7				
		9	2				4	
1			5	9	6			2

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A	B	A	■	U	B	O	A	T	■	U	P	S
M	I	L	K	P	U	N	C	H	■	N	O	M
■	■	■	A	P	T	■	E	N	A	C	T	S
W	A	L	L	E	T	■	R	I	C	H	■	■
A	N	I	■	T	A	P	■	C	E	L	L	O
G	E	N	T	■	L	I	E	■	D	I	A	N
S	W	E	E	P	■	P	V	C	■	N	I	L
■	■	D	R	A	B	■	O	R	N	E	R	Y
M	A	R	I	N	E	■	L	I	T	■	■	■
A	L	I	■	D	R	I	V	E	H	O	M	E
R	E	V	■	E	L	M	E	R	■	R	A	W
S	E	E	■	R	E	A	D	S	■	A	X	E

5	1	8	6	4	3	7	9	2
9	3	4	7	2	5	1	8	6
7	6	2	1	8	9	5	4	3
3	9	5	8	1	2	6	7	4
2	7	1	3	6	4	8	5	9
8	4	6	5	9	7	2	3	1
4	8	9	2	5	6	3	1	7
1	2	7	4	3	8	9	6	5
6	5	3	9	7	1	4	2	8

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Under 13 min .....Genius
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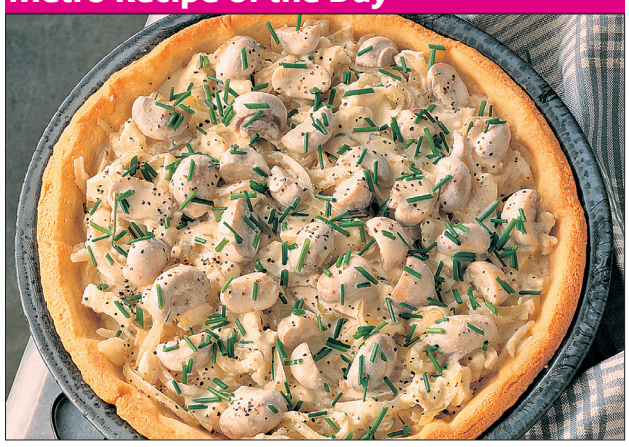
17-21 min .....Smart
21-25 min .....Not bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day



Onion and Feta Cheese Pie

INGREDIENTS:
1 1/4 cups (175 g) plain flour
1 tsp (5 mL) baking powder
5 tbsp (85g) butter, at room temperature
2/3 cup (150 mL) sour cream
1 lb (450 g) onions
2 sprigs of fresh thyme
4 tbsp (60 mL) olive oil
1/2 lb (230 g) button mushrooms
5 oz (140 g) feta cheese
Salt and black pepper
A few chives to garnish

METHOD:
1. Preheat oven to 425 F (220 C). Sift flour and baking powder into bowl, then rub in 3 tbsp (45 mL) butter. Add 5 tbsp (75 mL) sour cream and mix to a soft dough.
2. Roll out dough on floured surface into a circle about 11 in. (28 cm) in diameter, and use it to line a 10 in. (25 cm) pie plate. Trim edge, prick base, line with parchment paper, and fill with baking beans or small balls of cooking foil. Bake blind for 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, halve, peel and thinly slice onions, then rinse and dry thyme, strip leaves from stems, and chop finely. Heat oil in large frying pan, add onions and thyme, and fry over moderate heat until onions are soft and golden.
4. Melt remaining butter in another frying pan. Clean and halve mushrooms and fry until lightly browned, then stir in remaining sour cream and keep warm.
5. Remove paper and baking beans or foil from pie case, then return to the oven for a few minutes until pastry is golden.
6. Rinse, dry, and snip chives. Crumble feta cheese into onions. Heat for 1 minute then season to taste. Spoon mixture into the pie case and spoon mushrooms over top. Sprinkle with chives and pepper and serve.

SERVES 4

rd.ca
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Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
A photograph will reveal too much. Someone discerns the truth and will be in awe of it. Don't ask for more money right now.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
Watch out for other people's self-imposed limitations. Someone will behave badly. Being reasonable will buy you some freedom.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
An unmarried woman creates hostility. Encourage a busybody to tell the truth. A fearful person has some bad news.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
A younger person wants you to stay nearby. Someone will make a mess. No one is able to concentrate until you do.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
An incoherent authority figure makes his future plans. Don't gloat over a glitch. A romance is not going anywhere.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
A gift of clothing is greatly appreciated. A dim-witted man fails to understand an insult. Physical ailments limit outside activities.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
The wheel of fate will benefit you. You'll finally see the silver lining in a cloudy problem. It's time to share what you know.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
A desperate man wants to take his bad day out on you. Avoid speaking gibberish. The eye of the public is upon you.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
Be reasonable when a flash of temper occurs. Being humble is the proper path. Daydreams are replaced by realistic plans.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
A romantic guy can't be confronted without an explosion. Get things done before you leave. Children won't behave responsibly.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
Someone gives you a big surprise. There's a chance to face trouble and clear the air. A man makes a strange bid for affection.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
A bureaucrat is troubled because of a document. An error is too wonderful for words, so say nothing. Thrills will result from someone's sympathy.

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1. Small bit of land in Egypt's river (1)
2. "Damn Yankees" siren's Pepsis (2)
3. Criminal trembled (1)
4. Readily on-the-move duke or earl (2)
5. Sets fire to verandas (2)
6. Strike-and-spare gamer's back teeth (2)
7. Formal wedding party trickery (3)

Every answer is a rhyming pair of words (like FAT CAT and DOUBLE TROUBLE), and they will fit in the letter squares. The number after the definition tells you how many syllables in each word. To win $10, send your original rhymes with your definitions to this newspaper. All entries become the property of UFS, Inc.

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Thanks and $10 to Frank Gerken of West Sayville, NY for #4. Send your entry to this newspaper.

ANSWERS
1. NILE ISLE 2. LOLAS COLAS 3. CROOK SHOOK 4. MOBILE NOBLE
5. TORCHES PORCHES 6. BOWLERS MOLARS 7. RECEPTION DECEPTION

12-30-08

This day in history

DEC. 30, 1922 The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics is formed.
DEC. 30, 1924 Edwin Hubble announces the existence of other galaxies.
DEC. 30, 1944 King George II of Greece declares a regency, leaving his throne vacant.
DEC. 30, 1953 The first ever NTSC color television sets go on sale for about $1,175 US each from RCA.
DEC. 30,1977 For the second time, Ted Bundy escapes from his cell in Glenwood Springs, Colorado.
DEC. 30, 2006 Saddam Hussein is executed by hanging.

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COBOURG
Northumberland Mall

COOKSTOWN
Cookstown Outlet Mall (kiosk)

DON MILLS
Two Park Centre

ETOBICOKE
Cloverdale Mall
Sherway Gardens
Woodbine Centre

GEORGETOWN
330 Guelph St.

LINDSAY
229 Kent St.
Whitney Town Centre

MAPLE
2810 Major Mackenzie Dr.

MARKHAM
7357 Woodbine Ave.
Cachet Village
Market Village
Markville Shopping Centre
Pacific Mall

MILTON
377 Main St. E

MISSISSAUGA
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2800 Skymark Ave.
6965 Davand Dr.
Dixie Value Mall
Erin Mills Town Centre
Heartland Power Centre
Sheridan Centre
Square One Shopping Centre
Westgate SmartCentres

NEWMARKET
Upper Canada Mall

NORTH YORK
170 Rimrock Rd
2081 Steeles Ave. W
Bayview Village
Centerpoint Mall
Crossroads Plaza
Empress Walk
Lawrence Square
North York Sheridan Mall
Sheppard Centre
Yorkgate Mall

OAKVILLE
Hopedale Mall (kiosk)
Oakville Place
Winston Power Centre

ORANGEVILLE
114 Broadway Ave.

OSHAWA
Five Points Mall
Oshawa Centre

PICKERING
570 Kingston Rd.
Pickering Town Centre

RICHMOND HILL
Elgin Mills Crossing
Hillcrest Mall
Richmond Heights Plaza
Time Square Shopping Centre

SCARBOROUGH
259 Morningside Ave.
Bridlewood Mall (kiosk)
Cedarbrae Mall (kiosk)
Eglinton Square
Kennedy Commons
Malvern Town Centre
Scarborough Town Centre

SUDBURY
Brady Square
New Sudbury Centre
Southridge Mall

THORNHILL
Promenade Mall

TORONTO
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320 Queen Street W
209 Danforth Ave.
2171 Queen St. E
2256 Bloor St. W
2323 Yonge St.
Brookfield Place
Chinatown Centre
College Park
Commerce Court
Cumberland Terrace
Dufferin Mall
East York Town Centre
Eaton Centre
Eaton Centre II
Exchange Tower
Gerrard Square
Scotia Plaza
Toronto Life Square
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